

Emergency Responder

WASHINGTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION



WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

March-April 2002

E911 Wireless Legislation Signed into Law

Gov. Gary Locke signed House Bill 2595, creating an enhanced 911 excise tax for the implementation of wireless E911 on April 3. This bill's passage comes after many years of collaboration by the Washington state's communications and public safety industries. The new tax goes into effect Jan. 1, 2003.

The wireless 911 tax gains parity with the 911 wireline tax; a tax passed by voter referendum in 1991. It will also be used to coordinate and manage the E911 systems, help supplement operational costs of wireless E911 service, and reimburse radio communications service companies for costs of providing wireless E911 service. It parallels the wireline tax in providing support for statewide solutions to assure that E911 continues to operate as anticipated by those who dial 9-1-1 requesting assistance.

Funds generated by the E911 excise tax will not be distributed to any county that has not imposed the maximum county E911 taxes.

After Jan. 1, 2003, counties can impose an E911 excise tax on the use of 1) switched access lines not to exceed 50 cents per month for each switched access line. The tax amount must be the same for each switched access line; and, 2) radio access lines located within the county of not less than 25 cents but not more than 50 cents.

An E911 excise will be imposed on 1) all radio access lines used primarily within Washington in an amount of 20 cents per month for each radio access line. The tax shall be uniform for each radio access line; and, 2) all switched access lines in the state. The amount of tax shall not
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Gov. Gary Locke signs HB 2595 bill, the E911 wireless excise tax, into law which goes into effect Jan. 1, 2003. Witnessing his signature are (left to right) State Senators Sid Snyder and Karen Fraser; Gov. Locke; Bob Oenning, State E911 Office; Sophia Byrd; Washington Association of Counties; and Jim Potts, E911 Advisory Committee. (WA House of Representatives photo)

SAR Conference Slated for Skamania County in May

More than 1,000 persons from several states and foreign countries are expected at the 2002 Washington State Search and Rescue (SAR) Conference to be held May 13-19 in Skamania County.

The conference, which takes place at Stabler, Wash., about 10 miles north of Stevenson, will include advanced training in search management and incident command and more than 50 general search and rescue training courses ranging from basic search and rescue knowledge to the use of global positioning technology.

"We are excited to host this year's conference," said Skamania County Sheriff Chuck Bryan. "We have consistently ranked among the top 10 counties in Washington in terms of calls for search and rescue over the past several years. We have enjoyed the tremendous support of many volunteer SAR groups from Washington and Oregon on several missions, and we hope that by hosting the conference, ... it is, in a small way, our effort to thank them for their continued dedication to the field of search and rescue."

SAR volunteers from several western states as well as from Canada and New Zealand are expected to attend. The conference also will include support from the Oregon Air National Guard; the U.S. Army, Air Force and Coast Guard; and private air ambulance services.

Registration is \$55 per person. Forms can be obtained by calling the Skamania Sheriff's Office at (509) 427-9490 or from the conference web page at www.skamaniasheriff.com.

Public Safety & Industry Leaders Look at 911

An E-Safety Summit targeting tribal, federal, state, local governments, private health, communications technology and transportation industry leaders came together in March to raise awareness and understanding of emergency management and response in Washington. The State E911 Office in conjunction with the ComCARE Alliance sponsored the day-long Summit to support implementing better emergency communications and information tools.

More than 300 participants met March 26 in Olympia to discuss communication gaps in mitigation, response, homeland security, and emergency communications for mass emergencies and everyday events. Representatives from multiple public and private entities involved in emergency response, information technology and intelligent transportation systems attended this first of many planned stakeholder meetings. Sen. Maria Cantwell and representatives from the Offices of Rep. Norm Dicks, Sen. Patty Murray, and Gov. Gary Locke participated in this meeting.

The Summit emphasized ComCARE Alliance's Digital Emergency Services (DES) Initiative, a coordinated and integrated approach to emergency communications. David Aylward of ComCARE Alliance explained an eight-step plan to enhance homeland security by bringing 21st century capabilities, commonly used in e-Business today, to emergency response; deploying integrated, interoperable and interconnected wireline and wireless systems and applications.

Other Summit discussions included a high level overview of emergency issues in Washington today; a conceptual overview and demonstration of integrating technologies and solutions; the needs to integrate opportunity for funding and resource and programs committed to advance emergency issues; organizing state and local resources, programs and offices to advance emergency solutions; and creating a digital roadmap for emergency activity in Washington.

The Washington State University-Pullman, Center to Bridge the Digital Divide, in partnership with ComCARE Alliance of Washington, D.C., the State of Washington, and Global Telematics of Seattle will staff and lead efforts to develop an open, non-proprietary, statewide strategy to activate a series of very diverse stakeholders to become a national model for state deployment of modern emergency communications and information systems.

ComCARE Alliance is a national, non-profit alliance comprised of emergency doctors and nurses, state and local public safety officials, departments of transportation, citizen organizations, and wireless, transportation and technology companies. Its mission is to improve emergency communications and response through cooperation and the application of proven technologies to emergency response communications. For more information about ComCARE Alliance and its E-Safety Program, go to www.comcare.org.

E911 Wireless Bill Signed

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exceed 20 cents per month for each switched access line. The tax shall be uniform for each switched access line.

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) details the process for collection and remittance of the new E911 wireless excise tax and penalties for failure to comply. HB 2595 further defines the distinction between an emergency services communication system and an E911 telephone system.

For more information about RCW 38.52 and its amendments, contact the Code Reviser Office at <http://slc.leg.wa.gov/default.htm>. HB 2595 became Chapter 341 of the 2001-02 session laws when signed by the Governor.

Earthquake Update

Two major public assistance project awards have been announced this spring as part of the Nisqually Earthquake recovery program.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Washington Emergency Management Division (WEMD) in mid-March announced the State Department of General Administration will receive \$5.1 million as the first installment for earthquake-related repairs to the Legislative Building.

The 75-year-old Legislative Building sustained interior and exterior damage in the Nisqually Earthquake, highlighted by a three-quarters of an inch shift in the Capitol Dome. Building repair and rehabilitation are expected to be completed in November 2004. FEMA will pay for three-quarters of the earthquake repair cost with the state picking up the remainder.

King County, FEMA and WEMD announced April 12 that FEMA had approved \$2.6 million to repair earthquake damage to the King County Courthouse.

CSEPP Outreach Begins

Individual and family preparedness is the focus for a second year in the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) advertising campaign at the Umatilla Chemical Depot. In addition, the new campaign reaches out to new audiences including senior citizens and business owners.

April advertising began with messages for all kinds of emergencies—not just an accident at the Depot. The ads provide opportunities to learn about preparedness during this year's Ready, Set...Act! Week, April 20-May 7.

May advertising emphasizes different places where a person can find reliable preparedness information. The ads promote a web address and two phone numbers for more information.

The campaign will feature TV, radio and newspaper ads in Benton, Umatilla and Morrow counties in September.

More than 500 Attend Partners in Preparedness

The April 2002 *Partners in Preparedness Conference* in Bellevue attracted more than 500 persons including representatives from Canada and Mexico as well as state, county and jurisdictional emergency management, private businesses, volunteer organizations, and numerous schools and school districts.

Washington Emergency Management Division (EMD) along with the Seattle Chapter of the American Red Cross sponsored the two-day conference in an effort to promote partnerships in emergency management.

Guest speakers and 40 individual sessions lecturers gave presentations on a wide variety of subjects with particular interests in school and business preparedness, earthquakes, terrorism response and cyber terrorism. Susan Hutchison, KIRO-TV Channel 7 anchor, opened the conference with a lively and interesting speech on media response to disasters and the challenges of reporting the news in a time of disaster. Later that day, Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Lowenberg, the Adjutant General of the Washington National Guard and Washington Military Department director, spoke on terrorism, homeland security, and the business of the National Guard.

The *Partners in Emergency Preparedness Conference* provided a great opportunity for members in emergency management, continuity and risk management and emergency first response to discuss current issues in community emergency response as well as network with attendees throughout the state and learn from those who have dealt with emergencies within the state or on a national basis. Numerous vendors of emergency services equipment gave conference attendees a chance to learn what was new in emergency



Twenty-five local governments and independent agencies in the Portland-Vancouver area meet monthly to discuss and plan coordinated responses for emergencies. Regional Emergency Management Group accomplishments include identification of regional emergency transportation routes, preparation of a regional Emergency Alert System operation plan, support for a Metro Area Disaster Geographic Information System, and completion of a Regional Disaster Debris Management Plan. (EMD Photo by Max Messman).

IA Program Changes Name to Human Services

Washington Emergency Management Division (EMD) has changed the name of its Individual Assistance's Program to Human Services to coincide with the congressional amendments in 2000 to the federal Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

Provisions of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, Public Law 106-300, amended the Stafford Act and established a new Individuals and Households Program (IHP).

IHP combines into one new Stafford Act section the Temporary Housing Assistance, section 408 of the Stafford Act, and Individual Family and Family Grant (IFG), section 411 of the Stafford Act.

The Disaster Mitigation Act replaces the IFG program with a new "Financial Assistance to Address Other Needs" program that is outlined in 44 CFR Proposed Rule, Jan. 23, 2002. Like IFG, the new Other Needs assistance program features a 75 percent federal and 25 percent state match under administration by the state.

Disaster Mitigation Act guidance and rules still are under development. All provisions of the act will take effect with the first disaster occurring on or after May 1, 2002.

Besides recognizing the Stafford Act changes, the new Human Services designation aligns the state with its Federal Emergency Management Agency counterparts and better describes the program's full scope of human services responsibilities.

John Vollmer is EMD's Human Services Program Manager and can be reached at (253) 512-7076 to answer additional questions about the program and Stafford Act changes.

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Personnel

John Vollmer is one of 14 state employees of 270 nominated who was selected to receive the **2002 Extra Mile Award** for his work with the Nisqually Earthquake's IA Program. This award is part of the Public Service Recognition Week.

Randy Coggan joined EMD April 1 as an Emergency Operations Officer in the Response and Recovery Unit. He has worked 20 years in fire service positions and has served in local emergency management positions.

Deborah Henderson was named Program Assistant April 1 for the State and Local Assistance Program and the State Emergency Response Commission in the Policy, Programs and Training Unit. A six-year EMD employee, she has worked in the Nisqually Earthquake Disaster Field Office and in the Training Program.

Mark Stewart returned to EMD May 1 as the Hazard Mitigation Strategist in the Mitigation, Analysis and Plans Unit. An EMD public information officer from 1987 to 1995, he worked the past seven years for the State Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board.

Ray Cross became EMD's Training and Exercise Coordinator May 1 for the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program in the Policy, Programs and Training Unit. He previously worked for the U.S. Transportation Security Agency.

Disclosure Bill Passed

New state legislation designed to shield some government anti-terrorism information from the public and news media will take effect next June 13.

Substitute Senate Bill 6439, approved by lopsided majorities in the 2002 Washington Legislature, will exempt from public review and inspection:

- specific and unique vulnerability assessments and response or deployment plans for anti-terrorism. This includes the underlying data collected for these assessments and plans.
- anti-terrorism records not subject to disclosure under federal law and which are shared by federal or international agencies with state and local officials. This includes anti-terrorism information provided by national briefings to local and state officials.

The law will direct the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee to review the effect of these new disclosure exemptions by Nov. 30, 2004, and report to the Legislature.

Partners in Preparedness Conference

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equipment and technology.

The conference is conducted annually through a joint partnership of EMD, the Seattle American Red Cross, and other business entities such as Seattle Public Utilities and Puget Sound Energy who provide funding for the conference. Each year the conference showcases the importance of emergency preparedness and the work that has been done by the state of Washington and its partners to be among the national leaders in disaster preparedness.

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**Major General Timothy J. Lowenberg,
The Adjutant General**

Glen Woodbury, Director

**Rob Harper, Mark Clemens, Penelope
Cassidy, Editors**

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Washington Military Department
Emergency Management Division
Camp Murray, WA 98430-5122

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